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ABSTRACT

The Declaration of Independence today serves as one of the nation's most treasured symbols. The Declaration of Independence represents the moment at which the United States of America was born and embodies the reasons for its birth. This teacher's manual is designed to provide teachers with materials and activities to foster students' understanding of a crucial period in U.S. history. The manual includes lessons in history, civics, language arts, mathematics, and science to help teachers convey the continuities and innovations inherent in the Declaration, and its enduring role in U.S. culture. It can be used to serve a variety of grades as either a coherent unit or a source for individual lessons and enrichment projects. Following an introduction, the manual is divided into these grade-level sections: Section One: Grades 2-4; Section Two: Grades 5-8; and Section Three: Grades 9-12. Appendices contain primary source materials, maps, biographical data, and related Web sites. (BT)

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The Declaration of Independence: Save Our History. Teacher's Manual, Grades 2-12.

Hovey, Elizabeth
O'Connell, Libby Haight

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IN CONGRESS. JULY 4. 1776.

SAVE OUR HISTORY™

The Declaration of Independence

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TEACHER'S MANUAL

AT&T

Grades 2-12

SCIENCE • MATH • LANGUAGE ARTS • SOCIAL STUDIES

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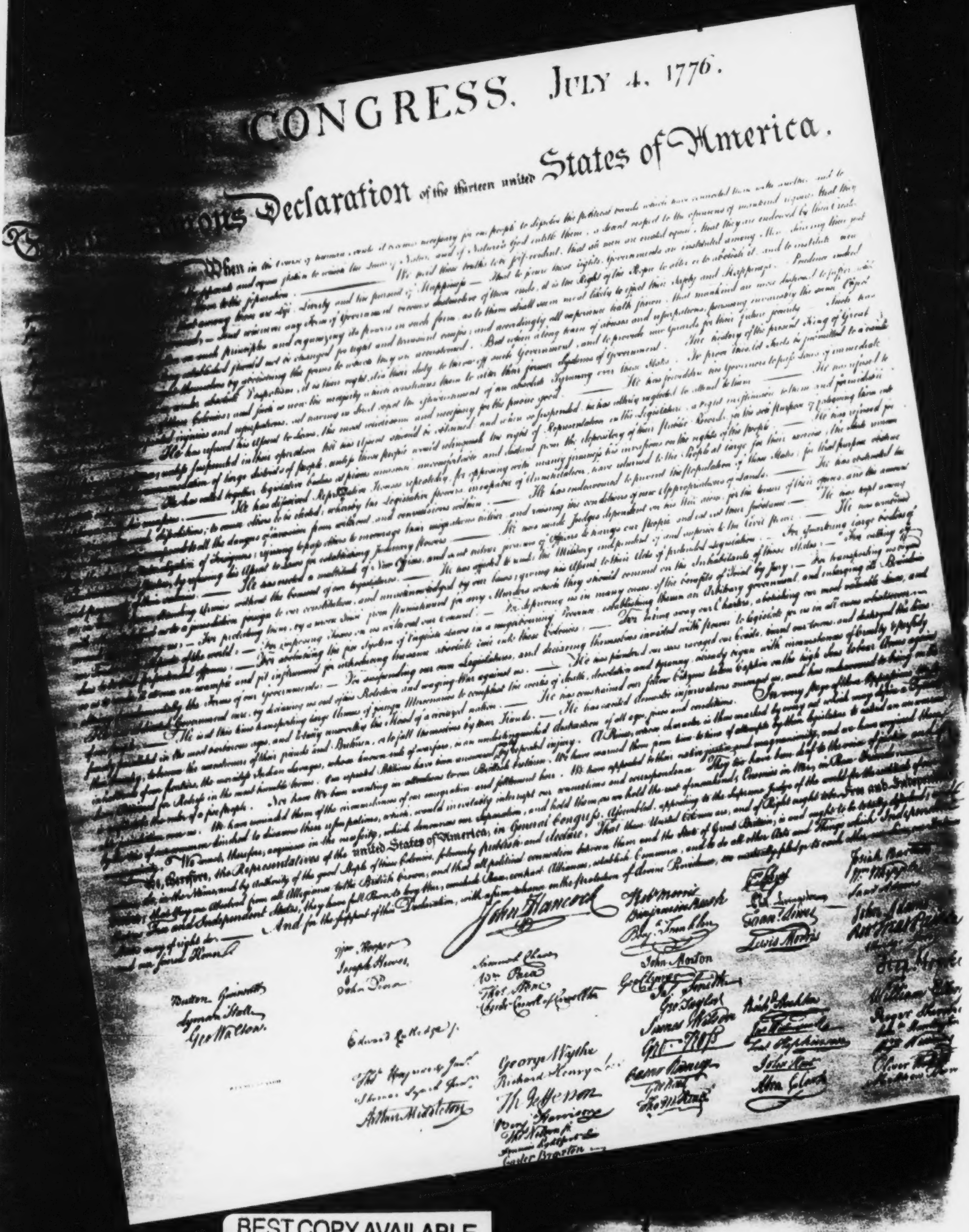

IN CONGRESS. JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.

John Hancock

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THE HISTORY CHANNEL

SAVE OUR HISTORY™

The Declaration of Independence

Dear Educator,

As one of the three "Charters of Freedom" that reside at the National Archives, the Declaration of Independence is a defining document in the history of the United States. It also represents the pursuit of equality and justice as a universal theme in the past, present and future of the human condition.

Along with the original U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence needs to be preserved for the next millennium.

That's why **The History Channel** has included this iconic document in *Save Our History*, our national campaign for historic preservation and history education.

The History Channel teachers who have written this manual have developed activities that can help you introduce the story of the Declaration of Independence across the curriculum, to a wide variety of grade levels. Inside, you'll find creative approaches that range from the science of preservation to using primary sources to inspire history students. Our partnership with AT&T has made it possible to distribute these materials free of charge to educators like you.

Effective teaching requires hard work and dedication. We hope that the *Save Our History: The Declaration of Independence* manual helps you reach out to your students and lead them into the new millennium.

Sincerely,

Daniel Davids
Executive Vice-President
and General Manager
The History Channel

Dear Educator,

The "Charters of Freedom" — the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights — are among the most important expressions of human rights ever written. Their values are stronger than ever, but the documents themselves are showing their age after more than 200 years.

As our millennium gift to the nation, AT&T is proud to take the lead in underwriting a public-private partnership spearheaded by the White House, Congress, and the National Archives to restore these documents.

We are also pleased to join with **The History Channel** in sharing the story of the Charters of Freedom with teachers and students throughout the United States. Education is a focal point of AT&T's philanthropy, especially the use of technology as a powerful tool for learning. But no technology can replace the unique contribution of committed teachers.

We hope these materials will be of some help as you teach a new generation of Americans to appreciate the meaning and value of our three Charters of Freedom.

Sincerely,

C. Michael Armstrong
Chairman and CEO
AT&T

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

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Editor
Libby Haight O'Connell, Ph.D.

Business Manager
Beth Ann Marian, M.Ed.

Writers
Elizabeth Hovey, Ph.D.
Libby Haight O'Connell, Ph.D.

Design Director
Madeline Gleason

Graphic Designers
Wendy Toffel
Tim Call

Business Coordinator
Lourdes Melendez-Gamez

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Declaration of Independence Project Teacher's Manual

The Declaration of Independence today serves as one of the nation's most treasured symbols. The ideas expressed within it have gained increasing importance since its adoption, almost eclipsing the other reason for its central place in United States history. More than anything else, the Declaration identifies the moment at which the nation was born and embodies the reasons for its birth.

The richness and centrality of the Declaration of Independence story leads to a variety of educational explorations - from history and civics to language arts and science. This manual is designed to provide teachers with rich materials and activities to foster students' understanding of a crucial period in American history. It helps teachers to convey the continuities and innovations inherent in the Declaration, and its enduring, evolving role in American culture.

The Declaration of Independence project is designed to serve a variety of grades as either a coherent unit or a source for individual lessons and enrichment projects.

GRADES 2-4

Section One: Overview for Teachers

The Declaration of Independence has served our country in countless ways. It announced the separation of the thirteen colonies from England and recounted, for Americans and the international community alike, the grievances that had forced independence. The stirring ideas and language of the Declaration have helped to give it a central place, not only in the story of our nation's founding, but in our sense of national identity.

In addition to history, the Declaration of Independence provides an opportunity to incorporate language arts and science concepts into students' understanding of this icon.

The activities and materials in the Declaration of Independence Project support the objectives specified by the *National Standards for History*, as developed by the National Center for History in the Schools, Los Angeles, CA. Many aspects of *Topic 3, Standard 4* "How democratic values came to be, and how they have been exemplified by people, events and symbols" are incorporated here.

LESSONS

I. The Story of the Declaration of Independence

Below is a retelling of the story of the Declaration of Independence and information about the Declaration's display in Washington, DC for a young audience. You will want to review the vocabulary words before you or your students read the story. Depending on the needs of your students, break up the story into several parts, having them do the map activities that follow to help them trace the story.

Objective: Students will be able to explain what the Declaration of Independence is and how it marked the creation of a new nation.

Time: One or two class periods.

Skills: Listening comprehension, map reading and labeling, reading comprehension.

Content area: History, Geography, Language Arts, and Reading.

Materials: Vocabulary, story, questions and map in Appendix 2, outlining the 13 colonies.

Vocabulary

colonies - lands or provinces that are far away from a country that rules over them.

settlement - place where people make their permanent homes.

Great Britain - island nation west of Europe made up originally of three older countries, England, Scotland and Wales and led by a King or Queen and Parliament.

colonists - the people who live in colonies.

Parliament - the legislature of the British government.

representatives - people who are chosen to speak for others from their community, colony or state.

patriot - one who loves a country.

taxes - money that governments collect from people or from the sale of goods to help pay the costs of government.

redcoats - British soldiers, who wore red uniforms.

intolerable - describes something so bad that a person cannot live with it.

minutemen-armed civilians who pledged to be ready in a minute to defend their communities from attack.

Philadelphia - largest city of the colonies that was also the capital of Pennsylvania.

Continental Congress - gathering of representatives from the 13 colonies of British North America to decide colonial plans and policy.

legislature - the part of a government that is made up of people elected to make rules and set taxes.

ignore - pay no attention to.

draft - to write an early version of something, or the version itself.

declaration - announcement or full statement.

independence - separateness, ability to stand on one's own.

rights - the powers and opportunities a person or group should be able to get.

parchment - a piece of animal skin treated to become a good, long-lasting surface for writing.

pamphleteer - one who writes a pamphlet, or short booklet, on a single subject.

The Story of the Declaration of Independence

There were thirteen **colonies** belonging to Britain that eventually became the United States. The first permanent **settlement**, Jamestown, became part of the colony of Virginia. The second settlement, Plymouth, became part of Massachusetts. In turn Maryland, Rhode Island, Connecticut, North and South Carolina, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and Georgia were either established by the British or taken over by them. The citizens of all 13 colonies considered themselves British citizens. Many came from Britain, but even those who came from other countries were British subjects. British kings and queens and **Parliament** provided Americans with protection from attacks. They also provided some laws and appointed leaders, such as royal governors. Every British settlement on the Atlantic coast of North America was part of a colony.

In 1756, Great Britain went to war against France. One of the things that they were fighting about was control of North America. It was a very expensive war. After the British victory, Parliament decided that American **colonists** should pay new taxes to help pay for the war. After all, British soldiers had fought to protect Americans. Many colonists did not like the **taxes.** They saw the taxes as a threat against their liberties as English citizens. Some complained that colonists did not get to elect **representatives** to Parliament, and so they should not be taxed by it. These people called themselves **patriots,** lovers of their country. When British troops, the **redcoats,** stayed in American ports to help protect tax collectors, that angered patriots too.

In every one of the 13 colonies there were some patriots angry at English policies by 1775, but Massachusetts patriots showed the greatest concern. In 1770, a mob in that colony threatened some redcoats who then fired their guns, killing 5 patriots. And late in 1773, some patriots dumped tea into the harbor to protest a new tea monopoly and a tax on tea. King George III and Parliament reacted by closing down Massachusetts' big port, Boston, and sending more troops. These "**Intolerable Acts**" made patriots angry. They were afraid that the king would soon use troops against the colonists. To protect themselves, the patriots started collecting military supplies.

In April of 1775, English troops tried to capture two patriot leaders and military supplies outside Boston. Instead, they found bands of armed volunteers called **minutemen** in Lexington and Concord. The minutemen and redcoats fired at each other, beginning the American Revolution. The Second **Continental Congress**, a gathering of representatives of all 13 colonies, began meeting a few weeks later in **Philadelphia.** The Congress made George Washington commander of the American forces. At the same time, it tried to convince King George to end the conflict peacefully.

King George **ignored** the colonists' complaints. He declared the colonies were in rebellion. By early January, 1776, British forces had attacked three other towns, from Portland, Maine (then known as Falmouth, Massachusetts) to Norfolk, Virginia. Many patriots, including the **pamphleteer** Thomas Paine, argued that the colonies should stop being part of Great Britain. Some members of Congress wanted to be sure that Americans in all the colonies wanted independence. Congress asked citizens to tell their representatives how they felt. Towns, counties, colonial **legislatures** and groups of citizens wrote them calling for independence.

In June, the Continental Congress created a committee of five members to draft a statement, or declaration, of independence. While the declaration was being created, Congress would decide what

to do. The declaration would need to say why the colonies were leaving the British empire and announce their independence. Thomas Jefferson of Virginia was on the committee. The other four, including Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, and John Adams of Massachusetts, decided he should draft it. They would all review it before giving it to the whole Congress.

Jefferson wrote his draft in a few days, using some wording from previous colonial declarations. He wanted to capture commonly held ideas about the basis of government. The phrase he wrote that became most famous was "all men are created equal." The draft declared that King George had done many things that were unfair and harmful to the colonies. It said that the people of the colonies had a right to create a new national government for themselves, one that would not have a king at all.

On July 2, 1776 representatives of all of the 13 colonies voted to become independent of Great Britain and form the United States. They then spent two days working on the declaration. They revised it to make Jefferson's draft the best announcement of the new nation that they could make. On July 4, the Continental Congress voted to use the edited version of the Declaration of Independence.

When the declaration was accepted, two officials signed it, the President of the Congress, John Hancock and Secretary Charles Thomson. Congress sent it immediately to a printer for copies to be sent throughout the colonies. In many cities and towns the Declaration was read publicly. In some places the ringing of church bells celebrated the declaration. George Washington ordered it read to the troops so that they would know that a new nation depended upon them. A few weeks later, a special handwritten copy was created on **parchment** and signed by members of Congress.

Congress had decided that the United States should be independent on July 2, 1776. However, we celebrate July 4 because that is the day that the Declaration of Independence was first signed. Many celebrations of the "nation's birthday" included readings of the Declaration of Independence. Americans began to think of the document most often as a statement of the country's ideas. Today the parchment copy, signed by the representatives of the states in August, 1776, is on display at the National Archives in Washington, D.C.

Discussion Questions

1. What were the ties between British people and Americans from the start of the colonies' settlement?
2. What happened that made the colonies' representatives in Philadelphia feel that making the colonies a separate country was a good idea?
3. Do you think Thomas Jefferson had a hard or easy job drafting the Declaration of Independence? Why?
4. Why do we celebrate the Fourth of July?
5. Before this story was shared with you, had you ever heard about the Declaration of Independence? When, and why was it mentioned?
6. Why do you think the Declaration of Independence is important?

Extended Activities

1. **Map work.** Have the students, alone or in pairs, identify the 13 British colonies on the map that appears in Appendix 2. Abbreviations may work best for younger students. If they are familiar with Plymouth and Jamestown, have them mark those. If possible, mark your location. Boston, Norfolk, Virginia and Philadelphia should also be marked. Ask your students some of the following questions:
   - When people in Boston wanted to tell all other colonists about their fears, what directions did they have to send their news?
   - What two colonies that became states look the smallest?
   - Which state had to send its representatives the farthest to get to Philadelphia?
2. **Holiday discussion.** Discuss with your students their understanding of the Fourth of July, and whether it changed with the reading of the story here. Have them then talk about birthdays and what characteristics the Fourth of July and regular birthdays share. Then, depending upon their skill level, have them draw two pictures or write a paragraph comparing and contrasting birthdays and the Fourth of July.

Advanced Activity

"In a constitutional Connection with the Mother Country, we shall soon be altogether a free and happy people."

> *Letter of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress that described the battles of Lexington and Concord, April 26, 1776.*

Familial Analogy.

Contemporary commentary about the events leading to the American Revolution frequently compared the colonies to children and Great Britain to parents. Depending upon the maturity of your students, this analogy provides an opportunity for them to sense the magnitude of American independence at an emotional level.

Discuss with your students the cultural and historical ties that led to the familial comparison being made. Then have them consider the analogy of children becoming independent of parents in a real family. Discuss the dangers of children leaving the protection and support of their parents. *If a student brings up an example of a child compelled to leave an abusive parent, point out that the patriots felt that Great Britain had become abusive of the colonies. By contrast, abused children need to have the care of an adult guardian.* Return to the situation of the colonies and list the dangers that faced the colonies when separated from the "mother country."

Acknowledge that when children reach a certain age, or colonies reach a certain degree of development, independence is not so dangerous. Have your students draw a picture or write a list that conveys the qualities and experience either a person or a collection of colonies needs to have before independence is wise.

II. Biographies

Three members of the drafting committee of the Declaration of Independence loomed especially large in the history of the American Revolution and of the early United States, generally. This lesson introduces Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and John Adams to students and encourages analysis of their ongoing contributions.

Objective: Students will identify historical figures who believed in fundamental democratic values and describe how they advanced the rights of individuals and promoted the public good.

Time: One class period.

Skills: Reading Comprehension, Historical Analysis.

Content area: History.

Directions

Depending on your students skill level, read or have them read one or more of the following biographies, and answer the related questions. The extended activities on the following pages relate to one or all the biographies.

Thomas Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) was born in Virginia in 1743 to a wealthy and well-known planter and his wife. Thomas was the eldest son among ten children and inherited slaves and 30,000 acres of land when he was 14. He obtained an excellent education studying with private tutors and attended the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, beginning at age 17. Tom studied law there and watched Virginia's legislature, the nearby House of Burgesses. Awkward and shy in large groups, he worked on becoming a good writer. After becoming a lawyer and a member of the House of Burgesses, Jefferson became a well-known writer in favor of the rights of British colonies.

In 1775 Virginia sent him to help represent it in the Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia. When Congress got ready to vote on independence from Great Britain, it put Jefferson on a committee with four others to draft a formal statement. They chose Tom to write the draft, which became one of the most famous and influential acts of his life. A few months after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, Tom returned to Virginia to help establish the government of the new state and help lead it through the war era.

In the decades that followed independence, Tom aided the new nation in many ways. He was an ambassador abroad, a secretary of state, a Vice President and a two-term President. As president he decided to make the Louisiana Purchase, doubling the size of the United States. While he was out of office he acted as a scientist, architect and inventor. He wrote about the geography and native peoples of Virginia and designed a beautiful home, Monticello. Tom also created a number of labor saving devices. He dedicated himself late in life to the founding and design of the University of Virginia. Thomas Jefferson died on the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Since he had put the needs of his country and the advancement of knowledge above taking care of his plantation, many of his slaves had to be sold to pay off his debts.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Jefferson decided to work on his writing ability?
2. How many different ways can you think of that an ability to write well may have benefited Jefferson?
3. Decide what you think Thomas Jefferson's three most important accomplishments were. Create a chart that explains your choices.

Benjamin Franklin

Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) began life in Boston in 1706 as the tenth son of a candle and soap maker. He attended school for only about one year, but taught himself so well that he became a very well respected writer, businessman, diplomat and scientist. As first apprentice to his half-brother, a Boston printer, Ben learned valuable skills. He also discovered an ability to write cleverly. After a dispute with his brother, he moved to Philadelphia and went into the publishing business for himself at age 16. By the time he was 23 his business was thriving, in part because of his writing ability. Ben became the currency printer for Pennsylvania and other colonies after writing about the importance of paper money. He bought and improved a popular newspaper. Most of all, Ben Franklin became well known for creating and publishing Poor Richard's Almanac, which became the second best-selling book in the colonies, after the Bible.

Ben used his growing wealth and influence to launch projects for public benefit. He started a lending library, a volunteer fire company, an association of scientists, an academy that became a university and a militia to defend Pennsylvania. He also worked for Pennsylvania as a clerk, a postmaster and a diplomat. Franklin became best known internationally for his scientific work after doing an experiment that demonstrated that lightening is a form of electricity. Franklin's fame and intelligence helped to make him a good representative for Pennsylvania and other colonies. They chose him to explain to King George III and Parliament why the colonists did not like the taxes imposed in the 1760s.

When disagreements between the colonies and Great Britain grew severe, Ben Franklin agreed to be in the Continental Congress. He reviewed Thomas Jefferson's draft of the Declaration of Independence and made some changes to it before the whole Continental Congress discussed it. Soon after the declaration's adoption, Franklin left for Europe to represent the United States to France and Great Britain. He helped convince France to support the new nation with troops and ships. Later, Franklin negotiated the peace treaty with Great Britain that ended the American Revolution in 1783. He served as the new nation's first Postmaster and took part in the Constitutional Convention, remaining active his whole life.

Discussion Questions

1. How does Benjamin Franklin's youth as an apprentice and printer show you that life was different in colonial times than today?
2. What qualities would Franklin have to have to be successful in the different things he did?

3. Decide what you think was Franklin's greatest contribution to America. Present to your class why you think it was important.

John Adams

John Adams (1735-1826) was born in 1735 in Braintree (later called Quincy), Massachusetts. His farming family was dedicated to reading, and his parents soon noticed that John was especially interested in learning. They encouraged him to be the first one in his family to go to college, and he attended Harvard. He studied law while working as a schoolteacher, and then became a lawyer. In 1764 John married Abigail Smith, a very strong and intelligent woman who discussed important contemporary issues with her husband throughout 54 years of marriage. As a lawyer, John protested new British taxes very skillfully. After the Adams settled in Boston, he became known as a patriot leader. Nevertheless, he agreed to act as the lawyer for British redcoats after the 1770 event that was called the Boston Massacre. He believed more in the right to a fair trial than in siding with the patriots in all matters.

Having been active in the Massachusetts legislature, John Adams was chosen to represent his colony in the first and second Continental Congresses. He nominated George Washington to be the commander of the American troops. John gained a reputation as one of the strongest proponents of American independence from Great Britain. When the Congress prepared to vote on independence, it put Adams on the committee to draft the Declaration of Independence. He convinced the rest of the committee that Thomas Jefferson was the best one to write the first draft. Adams helped Jefferson revise it, and defended it strongly while the Continental Congress debated the declaration's final wording.

During the rest of the revolution, Adams represented the United States to France and helped Massachusetts establish a new state government. He also helped negotiate the peace treaty with Britain. He became the nation's first vice-president under George Washington, and its second president. He was the first to live in the White House, just before his term ended in 1801. In later years he corresponded frequently with Thomas Jefferson, with whom he disagreed about how the new United States government should be run. Like Jefferson, Adams died on the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1826.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think of John Adams' decision to act as a defense attorney for the soldiers who shot and killed civilians in 1770? Why?

2. What reasons might Adams have for being an especially strong advocate of independence?

3. Many Americans are not as familiar with the story of John Adams as they are with Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and George Washington. Why do you think this is the case? Do you think he is as important as they are? Why or why not?

Extended Activities

1. Write or create a skit where John Adams, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson decide that Jefferson should write the Declaration of Independence and talk about what it should say.

2. Create a poster of one of these heroes of the American Revolution showing what they did for Americans.

3. Read the excerpts of Abigail Adams letter to John Adams that appears as Document F in Appendix 1. How does this letter affect your understanding of Adams?

4. If you have internet access, learn more about these revolutionary leaders by investigating these web sites or finding others.

Thomas Jefferson sites:

www.monticello.org/Day/A_Day_in_the_Life.html

www.cp-tel.net/miller/BilLee/quotes/Jefferson.html; www.th_jefferson.org

odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/P/tj3/about/jeffersonxx.html

dir.yahoo.com/arts/humanities/history/u_s__history/people/presidents/jefferson__thomas__1743_1826_

www.donaldburger.com/jefindex.htm

Benjamin Franklin sites:

sln.fi.edu/franklin/printer/abc.html

www.gms.ocps.k12.fl.us/biopage/a-g/franklin.html

sln.fi.edu/franklin/rotten.html

www.english.udel.edu/lemay/franklin

www.nahc.org/NAHC/Val/Columns/SC10-3.html

www.rsa.org.uk/franklin/default.Html

www.fi.edu/franklin/scientst/scientst.html

John Adams sites:

gi.grolier.com/presidents/nbk/bios/02pjohn.html

www2.whitehouse.gov/WH/glimpse/presidents/html/ja2.html

www.columbia.edu/acis/bartleby/bartlett/288.html

www.chesco.com/~artman/adams.html

www.webcom.com/bba/ch/adams/abio.html

odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/P/ja2

III. Preserving Documents and the Danger of Light: The Declaration of Independence

Learning about the preservation of the Declaration of Independence will help students understand hypothesis, comparison, and the impact of light and other conditions on documents over time.

Objective: Students will understand the effects of exposure to ultraviolet light on the condition of the Declaration of Independence.

Time: Three weeks.

Skills: Hypothesizing, drawing conclusions.

Content Area Science, History, Math.

Vocabulary

parchment - a piece of animal skin treated to become a good, long-lasting surface for writing.

vellum - a thin sheet of lambskin, calfskin or kidskin prepared for writing upon or binding books.

hypothesis - a prediction or idea about what happens in a situation that can be tested.

preserve - to keep safe from injury, to protect from damage.

preservation - the protection of cultural property through activities that minimize chemical and physical damage. The primary goal of preservation, and preservationists, is to prolong the existence of meaningful things belonging to a country or group of people.

Directions

1. Read the paragraph below to students.

2. Have students answer the questions provided.

Preserving the Declaration

The National Archives is preserving a special copy of the Declaration of Independence so it will last a long time. The declaration is so old it needs to be treated very carefully. This copy was created on parchment and signed by representatives of all 13 former colonies on August 2, 1776. It showed that these new states all supported the Declaration, and that the individual representatives did, too. Although it was always an important copy of the Declaration of Independence, the parchment was not always well kept. It was often rolled up and moved from place to place during the American Revolution, and later, when the nation's capital moved from New York to Philadelphia to Washington. It got wet while a copy of it was made in 1823, causing the ink to fade further than it already had. Then, in 1841, the declaration was put on display opposite a big window. After 62 years of display, the declaration looked very faint. Preservation experts suggested in 1903 that it be kept out of light and kept dry. They did not understand then that parchment needs a little moisture to keep from cracking. In 1952 the copy was put in a sealed container with moisture and a filter to help keep it from cracking and fading. It is on public display in its protected condition at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Preservationists examined it in 1995 to understand how to best protect it and will keep developing ways to help it. Look at the images shown in Appendix 1, Document A to see how the faded Declaration is today.

Discussion Questions

1. The Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776. Can you calculate how old it is? How would you describe how old it is? How old is it in decades, centuries?

2. Describe what happens to things as they get older. Compare what happens to food, clothes, toys, or buildings when they get older. Do they all get older in the same way?

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3. Do some things get older faster than others?

4. In 1903, experts thought that the parchment should be kept dry. Fifty years later they decided it needed moisture. What experiment would help you decide which treatment would be correct?

5. Imagine that you have a very old piece of paper, parchment or book. How do you handle it? Why?

Experiment

Students will examine the effect of sunlight on written and printed documents.

MATERIALS:

- Pieces of contemporary newspaper
- Pieces of contemporary magazine paper
- Pieces of lined paper
- Pieces of vellum (optional)
- Different kinds of pens (for example, fountain and felt tip pens in addition to ball point pens)
- Paint
- Windowsill exposed to strong sunlight

Directions

1. Break class into pairs.

2. Give each pair a piece of newspaper, magazine paper, vellum (optional) and lined paper.

3. Students should divide each piece of paper into two basically equal pieces, identifying each one with their initials.

4. Each pair should mark on every piece of paper with two different inks and one paint stroke. (If they write the kind of pen they use, it will help them make comparisons later.)

5. Students place half their papers (one each of the newspaper, magazine, lined paper and, if using, vellum) on the windowsill or other sunny area and the other half in a dark area (closet or drawer).

6. Ask the class to hypothesize about what will happen to the different papers, inks and paint. Have them write down and explain their answers.

7. Every three days, for three weeks, have the students compare the pairs of their paper and record any changes that they find. Encourage the students to revise their hypotheses after making their third comparison.

Discussion Questions

1. Were your original hypotheses correct?
2. What effect did light have on newspaper, magazine paper, vellum and lined paper? In what ways did the same kind of papers change, and in what ways did they stay the same?
3. What effect did light have on the different inks and paint? Did one kind of ink fade more? Did the paint fade less or more than the inks?
4. Did the printing on the newsprint and the magazine paper fade more or less than the ink and the paint? If you wanted to create something that would last a long time, what materials would you use?
5. Do you think that the inks used in 1776 were more or less likely to fade than the kinds of ink used today? Why?
6. Which of your papers was the most like the parchment used for the signed copy of the Declaration of Independence?
7. How many days did your samples sit in the sun? The signed Declaration of Independence hung opposite a large window for 35 years. About how many days was it exposed to sunlight?
8. Why do you think the Declaration of Independence needs to be protected from light?
9. How can the National Archives protect the Declaration of Independence while still allowing people to see it?

Printed copies of the Declaration of Independence have endured the passage of more than 220 years better than the handwritten, engrossed copy of the Declaration. To learn more about the length and important history of printing explore the website: www.digitalcentury.com/encyclo/update/print.html.

GRADES 5-8

Section Two: Overview for Teachers

Overview: The Declaration of Independence is a valuable teaching document for grades 5-8. It helps explain the creation of the United States and the theories of government that have informed, and ultimately inspired, the nation's evolution. The rhetoric of the Declaration lends itself to the study of language and the origins of words. Its celebrated signers provide opportunities for students to learn research skills. They may also consider the strengths of those who launched this nation. In addition, they offer interesting data for mathematical comparisons.

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The history objectives and activities in the Declaration of Independence project correspond to the *National Standards for History* for grades 5-8, as developed by the National Center of History in the

Schools, Los Angeles. Specifically, this supports the *Standards 1A and 1B for Era 3* "The student understands the cause of the American Revolution" and "the principles articulated in the Declaration of Independence."

LESSONS

I. Word Origins and Paraphrasing

Objectives: Students will be able to summarize key phrases of the Declaration of Independence in their own words and develop skills in deciphering multisyllabic words with which they are unfamiliar.

Time: One class period.

Skills: Reading, dictionary use, and writing.

Content Areas: Language Arts, History.

Materials: Declaration of Independence in Appendix, dictionaries.

Directions

1. Distribute to each student a copy of the entire Declaration of Independence.

2. For each of the following words from the Declaration of Independence, have students brainstorm about parts that they recognize or can relate to other words. Have them suggest the meanings of the words below that are unfamiliar to them based upon their closeness to more familiar words. Crucial roots, suffixes and prefixes are identified for you.
   unanimous [un — one, as in united, unicycle]
   declaration [declare — to say, clar — clear, as in clarinet, clarify]
   independence [pend — pendulum, pendant; depend — rely; in — not, as in inescapable, informal, infrequent]
   self-evident [evidence, video-visible]
   endowed [endowment]
   unalienable [un — not, as in undo, unasked, alien — strange, belonging to another place, -able — made so as to be, like bendable, understandable, moveable]

3. With the class working as a whole, translate phrases of the opening sentence of the declaration into their own words on the chalkboard. Ask them then to come up with their own phrasing for the most famous phrase "We hold these truths ... pursuit of happiness."

4. Divide the class into small groups, assigning each to one of the following phrases for translation into their own words. Encourage them to use dictionaries.
   - The third sentence of the Declaration, "That to ... Happiness."
   - The fourth sentence, "Prudence ... accustomed."
   - The fifth sentence, "But when ... Security."
   - The sixth through eighth sentences, "Such has been ... candid World."
   - The last paragraph, to its first semi-colon: "We, therefore, ... independent states."
   - The remainder of the first sentence of the last paragraph "that they are ... of right do."

5. Have the groups present their paraphrasing in the order they occur in the Declaration of Independence.

6. With or without writing the answers down first, have students discuss the following questions.
   a) How difficult did you find it to paraphrase the preamble and conclusion of the Declaration?
   b) What ideas do you consider most important in them?
   c) What are the ways that your class's paraphrasing is easier to read than the original?
   d) What are the ways that it is harder to read?
   e) Look over and then describe the major part of the declaration, between the preamble and the conclusion. This is called the list of grievances.
   f) Why do you think Americans, over time, have given the preamble more attention than the list of grievances?
   g) Who are the complaints directed against?
   h) Which ones seem the most serious to you?
   i) Read the last sentence of the declaration and translate it into your own words. Does it affect how you feel about the signers? How?

7. Have the students, either in class or as a homework assignment, write a paragraph summarizing the whole of the Declaration of Independence.

For the clearest statement of the ideas of John Locke that influenced Thomas Jefferson and the patriots generally, see his Second Treatise on Government, available at http://history.hanover.edu/early/locke/j-L2-001.htm.

II. The Declaration's Context and Primary Sources

Objectives: Students will be able to explain the difference between primary and secondary sources and appreciate the value of using primary sources. They will also be able to describe the context of the Declaration of Independence with reference to the everyday lives of people besides the signers.

Skills: Chronological thinking, historical analysis and interpretation, reading and writing.

Content Areas: History.

Materials: Declaration of Independence, primary sources in Appendix.

Directions for Teachers

1. Review with students the differences between primary and secondary sources. Ask them to describe the differences between a transcription of the Declaration of Independence and a description of it found in a textbook or encyclopedia.
2. Have your students brainstorm with you the variety of primary sources that might provide information about a particular event.
3. Review the list with the class, considering the usefulness of the different kinds of sources, their biases and the likelihood that different sources would survive for historians to use and share later.
4. Read aloud, have your students read, or convey the essence of the following paragraph to your students.
5. Direct them to read the designated primary sources in the Appendix and complete the exercises indicated. Depending upon your students' skill levels, you may divide the class into groups, assigning different groups questions 1-2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

6. Seventh or eighth grade students should consider the issues posed in question 7, which correspond directly to *National Standard for History 1B for Era 3*, for grades 7-12: "Demonstrate the fundamental contradictions between the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the realities of chattel slavery."

The Meaning of the Declaration of Independence

The meaning of the Declaration of Independence has changed gradually over time. Before it was written, it was conceived of as an announcement of the creation of a new nation, one that was forced into existence by the harmful acts of the British Royal Government. Thomas Jefferson drafted the declaration, choosing a structure and language commonly understood by colonists at the time. Consequently it reflected the tradition of English declarations, the colonists' philosophy of government and the grievances they had against the king. In the decades since the Declaration's signing, its philosophy of government, especially the proposition that "all Men are created equal" and have rights to "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness," has become the most important feature for many Americans. It represents a major ideal of the United States today. But this ideal gains more meaning when we recognize that its reach has grown as the understanding of Americans has grown in the course of a long and eventful history.

Directions for Students

1. With your teacher, look at the Declaration of Independence and its transcription appearing as Documents A and B in Appendix 1. How is it organized? What is it trying to do at its beginning, middle and end?

2. Read the British Bill of Rights that is Document C and the introduction to it. What similarities do you see in the organization of this document and the Declaration of Independence? What differences? Find and describe a complaint in the Bill of Rights that is echoed in the Declaration of Independence.

3. Read Document D. What are the greatest concerns of the Committee of Safety when it directs the writing of this letter? Why does it instruct the Georgian representatives to Congress in the way that it does? What conditions affect how the Savannah Council of Safety can advise the representatives? Speculate about what kinds of transportation this letter would need to travel on to reach Philadelphia. What does this document tell us about the support for independence?

4. Read Document E. Consider the situation in which it was written. How is this document like the Declaration of Independence? How is it different? How many people's opinions are represented here? What does this document tell us about the popularity of the patriot cause? If grand juries usually consisted of 23 white men during this time, what reasons might explain why only 15 men signed this document?

5. Read Document F. What challenges do Abigail Adams and her neighbors face that are created by the conflict with Great Britain? What tasks does she write about that are typical for her time, although not for ours? Although she does not use the word slavery in her letter, Adams associates Virginia with slavery very strongly. How does Abigail Adams feel about slavery? Abigail is also concerned that the men in the Continental Congress may overlook the liberties of women. How is the situation of married women in her time similar to the situation of the British colonies?

6. Read Document H. This notice, which aimed at the recapture of a runaway slave appeared on the same page as a reprinting of the Declaration of Independence. Historians often talk about the irony of context, the unlikely coincidence of two contrary ideas, events or things. What is ironic about this advertisement? Why did Alexander McCallum place this advertisement? What qualities did Harry have that might help him to escape from slavery? What negative stereotypes did Alexander use to describe Harry? How are these two descriptions contradictory? What does this advertisement show you about slavery and how masters viewed enslaved persons?

7. Abigail Adams doubted that slaveholders had the strong "passion for liberty" that she believed necessary for founding the new American nation. The appearance of advertisements to enforce slavery alongside the Declaration of Independence shows slavery's wide acceptance. How do you account for the unanimous approval of the phrases "all men are created equal" entitled to "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness" when all the colonies used slavery? Does it help your understanding to know that only white male property owners were allowed to vote in this time? How does your present day understanding of the ideals of the Declaration of Independence differ from the understanding of the signers?

Extended Activities

1. **Create your own "primary source."** Letters can be very valuable sources of information about the circumstances and feelings of people living in the past. Imagine that you were living in 1776 and write a letter as if you were one of the following people: A boy of your own age living on a farm; a woman who is spying for the American cause; Harry, the man escaped from slavery (who might have to ask someone else to write for him since slaves rarely were permitted to learn to read or write); a young woman whose whole family believes it is wrong to take up arms against the king's troops; a member of the Continental Congress. You may address your letter to an official in your colony/state, the Continental Congress or a loved one.

2. **Write a declaration.** With at least 3 others in your class, write a statement of ideas and beliefs you share. You need to be sure that everyone in the group agrees with all the ideas in the document, as if, like the signers of the Declaration of Independence, you had to back it up with your lives, possessions and your reputations. If you believe you will always defend these ideas, sign the document.

III. Math and the Declaration of Independence: Who were the Signers?

The signers of the Declaration of Independence hold special status as the men who launched the United States as a political entity. They also help us to understand the life in America at the time of the Revolution. Each colony participating in the Continental Congress in Philadelphia only got one vote, but it could send as many representatives as it wanted. The choices of how many representatives each colony sent and their backgrounds can be studied mathematically to reveal new information. Math skills enable students and researchers to act as historical researchers in this lesson, analyzing certain aspects of this group of people.

Objectives: By counting and using fractions to analyze characteristics of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and different state delegations, students will better understand the founding of our nation. They also will experience the value of mathematical comparisons in describing situations in the past and the present. The extended activities encourage the ability to

make historical comparisons and develop hypotheses.

Time: One or two class periods.

Skills: Subtraction, finding averages, fractions, making comparisons, forming hypotheses and map skills.

Materials: Informational chart and map of the 13 colonies in Appendix 2, and scratch paper.

Directions

1. Give students the map of the 13 colonies. Review with them the names of the colonies as the students label each colony with an appropriate abbreviation. Have them mark Philadelphia, the meeting place of the Continental Congress. Introduce the students to the data table, pointing out that information is slightly more complete for some of the 56 signers than for others. Such variation is common in historical research.

2. Provide students with a copy of the data chart that appears as Appendix 2B and review it. Ask them how old a particular signer was on July 4, 1776. Ask the students when someone would have to have been born to be at least 40 years old when he signed the Declaration of Independence.

3. Before students turn to the exercises and work sheets on the next page, review with them how to find an average, the concept of a majority, fraction skills and how to use hatch marks when counting many things at once.

4. Direct the students to answer the questions below, using the blank table to keep track of data. For students in grades 5-6 you may find it helpful to break the students into pairs or groups to divide up the research tasks.

Colony/State	Number of Delegates	Number Born Elsewhere	Number Born Overseas	Age of Delegates
New Hampshire				
Massachusetts				
Rhode Island				
Connecticut				
New York				
New Jersey				
Pennsylvania				
Delaware				
Maryland				
Virginia				
North Carolina				
South Carolina				
Georgia				

1. What four states had the largest delegations to the Continental Congress?

2. What state had the smallest?

3. What was the average number of delegates sent by colonies?

4. What fraction of the signers were born outside the colony they represented?

5. What fraction of the signers were born outside of the colonies altogether?

6. The majority of the delegates for five different colonies moved into the place that later chose them as representatives. Name those colonies.

7. Five colonies only had representatives who had been born within their borders. Name those colonies.

8. How many signers were over forty when the Declaration was adopted July 4, 1776?

9. Were the majority of the signers at least forty years old at that time?

10. What was the average age of each of these delegations: New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina?

Extended Activities

1. **Subtraction and Averaging Challenge.** The delegates from what state lived the longest, on average?

2. **Create Historical Hypotheses.** The following collections of facts, combined with answers to the above questions will help students to formulate hypotheses. They may consider other history they know as well. Use these hypotheses when answering questions a, b and c below.

- Virginia and Massachusetts were the first colonies settled by the English, in 1607 and 1620, respectively. Georgia was the last colony to be settled, in 1732. Pennsylvania was the most populous colony by the 1760s; it was growing fast, partly because its fertile land and religious toleration were appealing to immigrants.

- By January of 1776, British forces had burned Falmouth, Maine, then part of Massachusetts; Charlestown, Massachusetts and Norfolk, Virginia.

- Travel was very time-consuming and expensive in the 1700s. The British navy controlled the Atlantic Ocean, so water travel, usually the fastest, was not safe for patriot leaders. A trip by carriage from western Massachusetts to Philadelphia took nearly two weeks in 1775.

a) Look at the map of the thirteen colonies. Identify the four colonies that sent the largest and smallest delegations (questions 1-2 above). What factors do you think affected how many delegates a colony decided to send to Philadelphia?

b) Consider the birthplace of colonial delegations (questions 6-7 above). In which colonies did newcomers gain positions of leadership? Create a hypothesis about what made a colony a place where newcomers succeeded.

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e) Assess the composition of South Carolina's delegation, in terms of size, birthplace and age, compared to North Carolina and Georgia (questions 9-10 above, plus additional math). How would you describe the differences? Create a hypothesis explaining why South Carolina's delegation was so different from its neighbors'.

IV. Biographies

Objectives: Students will gain familiarity with a leader in the era of the American Revolution and develop research skills in traditional and electronic mediums.

Time: One class period, plus homework over the course of several days.

Skills: Reading, research, writing and consideration of character.

Content Area: History.

Materials: Brief biographies earlier in the manual and in Appendix 2C, library and internet access.

Directions

Introduce your students to the concept of the Revolutionary generation, its achievements and human qualities. Read the following paragraph. Then have your students read one or more of the three biographies that appear on pages 8-10. *Depending on the maturity of your students,* share with them the failings of these leaders, and discuss the questions that follow. Stress with your students that these leaders were mere human beings, with very human faults, but that they nevertheless made very important and lasting contributions to the American people.

In all classes, introduce the biography creation exercise to your students by having them brainstorm the qualities that make for good leaders. Students then review descriptions in Appendix 2C of many members of the Second Continental Congress and choose a member of the revolutionary generation to research. Each will write a biography that relies upon at least three sources. If internet access is available, you may want to require the citation of at least one internet source, but have your students explain why they think it is a reliable source. Assign a biography length requirement appropriate for the age of your students.

The Revolutionary Generation

The men who managed to lead the colonies to independence and stable governments while fighting and winning a war against the greatest military and economic power in the world became known as the Revolutionary Generation. They were celebrated and revered by later generations of Americans. Because the achievements of that generation of leaders endured so well, it became common for Americans to view them almost as superhumans. Their faults and human weaknesses were considered unimportant and, for a time, forgotten. Today the faults of these past leaders are recognized more readily, as with the reality that they succeeded at a time when African-Americans and women had no significant opportunities to lead the nation. Nevertheless, these men gave lasting contributions to this country that deserve appreciation.

Human Failings

Benjamin Franklin failed to keep early promises of loyalty he made to his eventual wife and often ate and drank excessively. Thomas Jefferson was awkward and did not manage finances well. Recent biological evidence also indicates that Jefferson took advantage of his position as a slave owner and

fathered children with a slave. John Adams had a severe temper, reportedly made himself obnoxious to many in the Continental Congress, and in later years was described as arrogant.

1. Are the achievements of these three men any less important because of their flaws?

2. What do you consider the most important lasting achievements of Jefferson, Franklin and Adams?

3. What qualities help to make people good leaders and admirable people?

Biography Exercises

Look at the list of members of the Continental Congress (Appendix 2C) and choose one who interests you for the subject of a biography. Others who signed the Declaration of Independence, or participated fully in the American Revolution can also be chosen. Conducting research in your classroom, library, and, if possible the internet, take notes and write a biography about one member of the Revolutionary Generation. In your biography answer the following questions:

- How did the youth of your subject affect his later life?
- What were the major achievements of your subject?
- Are there qualities that your subject had that were not so admirable?
- What do you think the most important lasting contribution of this person is?
- Considering all you know about this person, do you think your subject should be appreciated today?

GRADES 9-12

Section Three: Overview for Teachers

The story of the Declaration of Independence provides an outstanding opportunity for students to develop several crucial thinking skills intrinsic to the pursuit of history. High school students can increase their historical comprehension skills by examining, comparing and analyzing the content of historic documents. The special place that the Declaration of Independence itself and Thomas Jefferson's original draft hold in our national culture enriches students' experience of finding the literal meaning of these texts. Likewise, a variety of primary sources from the Revolutionary period through the nineteenth century convey how the ideas of the Declaration of Independence gained new resonance as the nation grew and changed.

The decision to declare independence itself seems undoubtedly appropriate and wise more than two hundred and twenty years later. Yet the military success of the independence effort, and the nation's later successes obscure the logic behind many Americans' wishes to remain part of the British empire. Examining the decision to declare independence will enhance students' abilities to consider multiple perspectives and explain causes in analyzing historical actions. These skills and this content

support the attainment of *Standards 1A and 1B for Era 3* of the *National Standards for History*, grades 9-12.

LESSONS

I. Considering Opposing Views of American Independence

Political parties in the United States today often disagree about policy, but few Americans would go to war against those who support another party. However, the American Revolution can be traced to a political conflict between two parties in the British government: the Whigs and the Tories. At the conclusion of the Seven Years War (also known as the French and Indian War), Tories argued that the American colonies benefitted from the outcome of that expensive war but did not pay their share of its costs. Tories also felt that the American colonies should be under closer royal control than they had been. Whigs argued that all of Great Britain had benefitted from the existing economic and political arrangement, so it should be left alone. As you know, protests against Tory policies led to angry confrontations and bloodshed. In the spring of 1776, many Americans thought independence was a premature idea, if not a bad one. Even John Dickinson, the first American writer to become well known for his criticism of Tory policies, argued against waging war and rejecting the status of British subjects. In this exercise, students will present and listen to the arguments of both perspectives on the American Revolution.

Objectives: Students will explain how the consequences of the Seven Years War and the subsequent changes in imperial policy set the stage for the American Revolution. They will review critical events and compare the arguments put forth by opponents and defenders of British policies and the later views regarding independence.

Time: 1-2 class periods.

Skills: Reading comprehension, critical thinking, public speaking.

Content area: Political Science, History.

1. Divide the class into four debate teams. Each group will review and analyze major events of the 1760s and 1770s from different historical perspectives.

2. Identify the first two teams as the Tories and the Whigs. They will debate the statement "The protest known as the Boston Tea Party was justified." In forming their arguments, members of each team should consider the Tea Tax and at least 3 of the following historical events: The Proclamation of 1763, the Navigation Acts, the Quebec Act, The Stamp Act, The Townsend taxes, the "Boston Massacre" and the Tea Tax. Students should keep in mind that they participate in the debate as British citizens living in the Americas.

3. The second two groups represent delegates to the Second Continental Congress who had to vote on July 1, 1776 for or against Richard Henry Lee's proposal that the Congress resolve that the colonies "are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States." In forming their argument, team members must consider at least 4 of the following: the "Boston Tea Party," the Quebec Act, the Olive Branch Petition, the King's declaration that the colonies were in rebellion, incidents of armed confrontation, the arguments of John Dickinson, British military power, and the Lockean philosophy of government conveyed in the Declaration of Independence. They should also examine Document G in Appendix 1.

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4. Using their textbooks, primary sources in the appendix and, if possible, library and internet sources, students should research and each write a one page defense of their side of the proposition.

5. Groups should meet, exchange papers with teammates, and develop a 5-minute argument based upon them. They should choose their first and second presenters, by lots if necessary. They should also be ready to respond the other side with a two minute rebuttal containing relevant facts and arguments.

6. Students will evaluate the team with the opposing argument in the debate where they only observed. For example, members of the Whig group will evaluate the Continental Congress members who voted against independence. They need to consider the following questions: Did the presenter provide good facts and logic? What points did the presenter make that you have not considered before? How do you imagine a typical citizen might have felt about these arguments in 1773 or 1776?

7. The first two groups each make a five-minute presentation. They get 7 minutes to decide on the major points of their two-minute follow-up presentations. They then deliver their follow-ups. Repeat with the second pair of groups. All students should submit their original essays and their evaluations.

II. Writing the Declaration: Influences and Editing

As the Declaration of Independence gained importance for Americans as a statement of ideals and principals to which the United States and governments throughout the world should adhere, Thomas Jefferson grew in stature as the man who wrote it. While his talents as the drafter of the declaration deserve honor, the craft of writing and the history of the declaration require an appreciation of the many contributors to the final product. The intellectual origins of the Declaration and its virtual denial of the problem of slavery both aid this understanding.

Objectives: Students will understand the role of Locke and English antecedents on the shape and rhetoric of the Declaration of Independence. They will also trace the editing stages that the declaration passed through, and recognize its failure to address the issue of slavery.

Time: 1 or 2 class periods.

Skills: Reading, political science, writing, editing, historical analysis.

Content Areas: Political Science, History, and English.

Materials: Declaration of Independence and British Bill of Rights 1689 in Appendix 1, excerpts of Jefferson's draft printed below.

Directions

1. Have students discuss their understanding of the origins of the Declaration of Independence. Write major points on the blackboard. If students are not yet familiar with John Locke's theory of government, introduce it. Then have the students identify where the declaration's opening paragraphs employ this philosophy. A reprint of Locke's Second Treatise on Government appears at http://history.hanover.edu/early/locke/j-L2-001.htm.

2. Direct students to read the excerpts of the British Bill of Rights in the Appendix. Ask them to describe any similarities that they see with the Declaration of Independence. Explain that colonists carried with them the British tradition of declaring major changes in government structure and justifying them with a review of history.

Introduction to editing exercise: Students will grasp most clearly the role of the drafting committee and the Continental Congress in altering the rhetoric and meaning of parts of the Declaration by comparing the before and after versions. For directions 3-5, make the language of the Jefferson draft and the final approved Declaration (Appendix 1B) available to students.

3. Have the class review the opening lines of the published Declaration of Independence and the beginning of the draft Jefferson shared first with the drafting committee, shown below. (The entire draft will be available on HistoryChannel.com with other study materials.) Ask students to mark changes by inserting new language and striking out deleted text.

Draft: *When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for a people to advance from that subordination in which they have hitherto remained, & to assume among the powers of the earth the equal & independent station to which the laws of nature & of nature's god entitle them, a decent respect ~~to~~ the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the change.*

Final: *We hold these truths to be sacred & undeniable; that all men are created equal & independent, that from that equal creation they derive rights inherent & inalienable, among which are the preservation of life, & liberty, & the pursuit of happiness;*

Discussion Questions: Why do you think each change was made? Do you think that the change improved the clarity of the Declaration? Do you think that the revision affected the meaning of the opening? Does it matter who suggested these changes from Jefferson's draft? Why? or Why not?

4. The main body of the Declaration of Independence consists of complaints against King George III. These serve as the reasons why the colonies chose independence over remaining in the British empire. Compare the following draft grievances with the version of them approved and signed by the Continental Congress.

Draft: *... he has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, & conditions of existence;*

he has incited treasonable insurrections in our fellow-subjects, with the allurements of forfeiture & confiscation of our property;

Final: *He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction, of all ages, sexes and conditions.*

Discussion questions: Who could be involved in the "domestic insurrections"? Why would the Congress decide to combine two charges into one? Do you think the final version seems more persuasive?

5. The longest and last of all the charges against the king that Jefferson drafted was deleted by the Congress. This is what it said:

Draft: *he has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating it's most sacred rights of life & liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating & carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. this piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian king of Great Britain. determined to keep open a market where MEN should be bought & sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce: and that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he has deprived them, & murdering the people upon whom he also obtruded them; thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.*

Discussion questions: What is this paragraph about? What phrases in it do you consider accurate? What phrases conflict with your understanding of American history? This is the only passage where Jefferson used underlines for emphasis. How do you think he felt about slavery? British military leaders promised that slaves who left patriot masters to join the British ranks would be freed. Did Jefferson approve of this plan to free slaves? Why do you think Congress eliminated this paragraph?

Extended Activities

1. **Examine Jefferson's Sources.** Thomas Jefferson had with him two documents when he drafted the Declaration of Independence: The Virginia Declaration of Rights, which had been drafted a few weeks before by George Mason [available at www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trt006.html; transcribed at www.wlu.edu/~omcguire/varights.html], and his own draft of the preamble to Virginia's constitution, which used the British declaration as a model [available at www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trt003.html]. Look at copies of these documents and find 4 similarities with the Declaration of Independence and 2 differences.

2. **Improve on the Declaration.** Divide your class into four or more declaration committees. Assign each group a section of the final declaration and have them revise it so that it would be understandable to fifth grade students. (As a variation, they can also choose to change the meaning if they think certain sections could be improved upon.) Group members would each take a part and write a draft of it. Then the group would act as a committee to review and revise their part before publishing it by sharing it with the whole class.

III. Tracing the Declaration's Significance: Working with Primary Sources

The significance of the Declaration of Independence has changed greatly over time. It was once thought to be primarily issued in order to convince nations such as France and the Netherlands to provide military support to the Americans, but the document did not matter as much to those nations as the act of declaring the separation. Americans themselves used the document to inspire sacrifice during the revolution. The equitable principles it stated contributed to state laws that abolished slavery in most northern states soon after the Revolution. In the decades to follow, the Declaration remained a national symbol and was celebrated and emulated in France. The Declaration did not clearly influence national policy until abolitionists promoted it as a statement of American principles. Abraham Lincoln captured this sentiment in his Gettysburg Address and the

loftiest ideals of the Declaration have been used to challenge or justify national policy ever since.

Objectives: Students will understand the unique, yet shifting, place that the Declaration of Independence has had in American life and politics. Students will appreciate the benefits and challenges of working with primary source materials.

Time: 1-2 class periods.

Skills: Historical analysis, reading comprehension, writing.

Materials: Primary source materials in Appendix 1.

Content: History, Political Science.

1. Celebrations of the Declaration of Independence began when it was first read in July, 1776 in many cities and towns. In Savannah, Georgia, it was read four times, in the colonial Council Chamber, in a public square, at Savannah's Liberty Pole [a symbol of patriot resistance to royal policy] amid ceremonial marching, and at the Trustee Gardens, followed by cannon fire.
   a) What accounts for the degree of celebration in places like Savannah, do you think, the principles announced in the Declaration, or the creation of the new nation?
   b) Look at the length of the Declaration of Independence and consider that many people listened to it in its entirety several times in succession. Does that fact tell you anything about American culture in the 1770s compared to today?

2. Examine the beginning of the French "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen," presented as Document I in Appendix 1.
   a) What language do you find common to both the American and French declarations?
   b) Does it aid your understanding of the French document to know that the Marquis de Lafayette, who aided Americans in their revolution, wrote the first draft of this document?
   c) King Louis XVI signed the French declaration, marking the beginning of the French Revolution. The French soon overthrew the monarchy and executed the king and queen. Explain why you think some Americans were very strongly supportive of the French Revolution, but others were opposed to it.

3. Read the description of a Fourth of July celebration in 1837 (Document J in Appendix 1).
   a) How does this Fourth of July celebration compare and contrast with those that you know?
   b) Why does the narrator say that those who were old enough listened to it 61 times?
   c) Based upon this primary source, would you say that 19th Century Americans believed that the Declaration of Independence described the principles of the United States? Why or why not? Do 20th Century Americans feel the same way?
   d) How is the perspective of this primary source limited?

4. Read the excerpts of a Fourth of July speech that Frederick Douglass gave in 1852 (Document K).
   a) Compare the impression you get from this Fourth of July document with the one you get from the last document.
   b) How does Frederick Douglass show that slavery is the uppermost issue in his mind?
   c) What does he think of the Declaration of Independence?
   d) Based upon this primary source, would you say that in the United States the principles of the Declaration of Independence were honored in the 19th Century?
   e) How is the perspective of this primary source limited?

5. Today, an average of nearly a million people a year visit the Declaration of Independence, along

with the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights of the National Archives Exhibition Hall in Washington D.C.

a) How does this regard for the Declaration of Independence compare with that shown by

1) the French in 1789?

2) New Yorkers in 1837?

3) Frederick Douglass in 1852?

b) What do you feel is the best way to celebrate the Declaration of Independence?

6. Review with your teacher the number of nations that were monarchies at the time of the American Revolution and the extent of representative, democratic governments today. How does this change reflect the appeal of the principles of self-government that are contained in the Declaration of Independence?

Extended Activities

Internet Research Timeline

Find as many examples as you can of how the Declaration of Independence has affected and influenced people inside and outside of the United States throughout history. Write a sentence or two describing the influence and the occasion. Put these events on a time line.

Express your views on the Declaration of Independence. Write an essay on one of the following topics:

Topic 1. When feminists gathered in Seneca Falls, New York, in July, 1848 to protest the status of women, they issued a "Declaration of Sentiments" modeled on the Declaration of Independence. When Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his "I Have A Dream" speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963, he said he dreamt of the day when the United States would live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal." Why is the Declaration of Independence so central to these and other protests? Do you think it will continue to serve in this role?

Topic 2. In President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, delivered November 19, 1863, he said the United States was dedicated to the idea that all men are created equal and that it was a unique government "of the people, by the people and for the people." In 1996, when President Bill Clinton was running for re-election, he said, "our kind of American" believes "in the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights." Based upon history, do you find these statements accurate? Do you think that they are useful statements for Americans? Why or why not?

Appendix 1. Primary Sources

Document A.

Early copies of the Declaration of Independence. 1) Inside back cover: A "Dunlap Broadside" of the Declaration of Independence, printed by John Dunlap, July 5, 1776. 2) Inside front cover: An engraving by William J. Stone, an 1823 reproduction of the parchment copy that was signed by members of the Continental Congress. 3) Below: Enlargements of portions of the parchment copy of the Declaration of Independence on display at the National Archives, the date at the top of the Declaration and the signatures of John Hancock and other signers. (*The photographs are provided courtesy of the National Archives and Record Administration.*)

Document B.

Transcription of the Declaration of Independence.

IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just

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powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.—Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

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For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offenses

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our Brittish brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

The 56 signatures on the Declaration appear as follows:

Georgia:

Button Gwinnett

Lyman Hall

George Walton

North Carolina:

William Hooper

Joseph Hewes

John Penn

South Carolina:

Edward Rutledge

Thomas Heyward, Jr.

Thomas Lynch, Jr.

Arthur Middleton

Massachusetts:

John Hancock

Maryland:

Samuel Chase

William Paca

Thomas Stone

Charles Carroll of Carrollton

Virginia:

George Wythe

Richard Henry Lee

Thomas Jefferson

Benjamin Harrison

Thomas Nelson, Jr.

Francis Lightfoot Lee

Carter Braxton

Pennsylvania:

Robert Morris

Benjamin Rush

Benjamin Franklin

John Morton

George Clymer

James Smith

George Taylor

James Wilson

George Ross

Delaware:

Caesar Rodney

George Read

Thomas McKean

New York:

William Floyd

Philip Livingston

Francis Lewis

Lewis Morris

New Jersey:

Richard Stockton

John Witherspoon

Francis Hopkinson

John Hart

Abraham Clark

New Hampshire:

Josiah Bartlett

William Whipple

Massachusetts:

Samuel Adams

John Adams

Robert Treat Paine

Elbridge Gerry

Rhode Island:

Stephen Hopkins

William Ellery

Connecticut:

Roger Sherman

Samuel Huntington

William Williams

Oliver Wolcott

New Hampshire:

Matthew Thornton

Document C.
British Bill of Rights (1689).

About 90 years before the American Revolution, an event in Britain became known as the Glorious Revolution (1688). King James II managed the country poorly in many different ways, appeared to be defying the official religion of the country, and left the country when opposition to him grew strong. Parliament invited distantly-related royalty from part of protestant Netherlands to become the British king and queen. After William and Mary agreed to ascend to the throne, Parliament issued this Bill of Rights to explain what had happened and why. Americans used the tradition of this document in the midst of war, but no blood was shed in the Glorious Revolution.

An Act Declaring the Rights and Liberties of the Subject and Settling the Succession of the Crown

Whereas the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons assembled at Westminster [Parliament], lawfully, fully and freely representing all the estates of the people of this realm, did … present unto their Majesties, then called and known by the names and style of William and Mary, prince and princess of Orange, being present in their proper persons, a certain declaration in writing …[with the following words],

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Whereas the late King James the Second, by the assistance of diverse evil counsellors, judges and

ministers employed by him, did endeavour to subvert and extirpate the Protestant religion and the laws and liberties of this kingdom;

By assuming and exercising a power of dispensing with and suspending of laws and the execution of laws without consent of Parliament; ... [three more charges]

By raising and keeping a standing army within this kingdom in time of peace without consent of Parliament, and quartering soldiers contrary to law;

By causing several good subjects being Protestants to be disarmed at the same time when [Catholics] were both armed and employed contrary to law; [seven more charges]

All of which are utterly and directly contrary to the known laws and statutes and freedom of this realm;

And whereas the said late King James the Second having abdicated the government and the throne being thereby vacant, his Highness the prince of Orange ... did ... cause letters to be written ... to the several counties, cities, universities, boroughs and ... ports for the choosing of such persons to represent them as were of right to be sent to Parliament, to meet and sit at Westminster....

[Asserting] their ancient rights and liberties [they] declare [that the things they complained of, including the] raising or keeping a standing army within the kingdom in time of peace, unless it be with consent of Parliament [are illegal].

[With confidence that William and Mary will protect the rights of the citizens and Parliament, they are offered and accept the crowns of Great Britain.]

Document D.

Georgia's Letter of Instruction.

In the spring of 1776 the Continental Congress asked colonies to advise their representatives regarding independence. A group organized to protect the citizens of Savannah, Georgia sent this letter to that colony's three representatives: Button Gwinnett, George Walton and Lyman Hall.

Archibald Bulloch
President, Council of Safety
Savannah, GA
April 5, 1776

Gentlemen,

Our remote situation from both the seat of power and arms, keeps us so very ignorant of the counsels and ultimate designs of the Congress, and of the transactions in the field, that we shall decline giving any particular instructions, other than strongly to recommend to you that you never lose sight of the peculiar situation of the province you are appointed to represent: The Indians, both south and northwesterly, upon our backs; the fortified town of St. Augustine made a continual rendevous for soldiers in our very neighborhood; together with our blacks and tories with us; let these weighty truths be the powerful arguments for support. At the time we also recommend it to you, always to keep in view the general utility, remembering that the great and righteous cause in which we are engaged is not provincial, but continental. We, therefore, gentlemen, shall rely upon your patriotism, abilities, firmness, and integrity, to propose, join and concur, in all such measures as you shall think calculated for the common good, and to oppose such as shall appear destructive.

By order of the Congress,

Archibald Bulloch, President

Document E.

Grand Jury Declaration.

The presiding judge of the major court in one part of South Carolina asked members of its grand jury to explain the basis of government in South Carolina in May of 1776.

Cheraws District, South Carolina

At a Court ... for said District, at Long Bluff, in the Colony aforesaid, on Monday, the 20th day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy-six: The Presentments of the Grand Jury of and for the said District:

I. When a people, born and bred in a land of freedom and virtue, ... from too sad experience are convinced of the wicked schemes of their treacherous rulers to fetter them with the chains of servitude, and rob them of every noble and desirable privilege which distinguishes them as freemen, -- justice, humanity, and the immutable laws of God, justify and support them in revoking those sacred trusts which are so impiously violated, and placing them in the manner and for the important ends for which they were first given.

II. The good people of this Colony, with the rest of her sister Colonies, confiding in the justice and merited protection of the King and Parliament of Great Britain, ever signalized themselves by every mark of duty and affection towards them, and esteemed such a bond of union and harmony as the greatest happiness. But when that protection was wantonly withdrawn, and every mark of cruelty and oppression substituted; when tyranny, violence and injustice, took the place of equity, mildness and affection; and bloodshed, murder, [and] robbery ... stamped the malignity of her intentions; self-preservation, and regard to our own welfare and security, became a consideration both important and necessary. The Parliament and Ministry of Great Britain, by their wanton and undeserved persecutions, have reduced this Colony to a state of separation from her, unsought for and undesired by them; a separation which now proves its own utility, as the only lasting means of future happiness and safety. ...

III. We now feel every joyful and comfortable hope that a people could desire in the present [South Carolina] Constitution and form of Government established in this colony; a Constitution founded on the strictest principles of justice and humanity, where the rights and happiness of the whole, the poor and the rich, are equally secured ...

V. Under these convictions, and filled with these hopes, we cannot but earnestly recommend it to every man, as essential to his own liberty and happiness, as well as that of his posterity to secure and defend with his life and fortune a form of Government so just, so equitable, and promising ...

VI. We cannot but declare how great the pleasure, the harmony and political union which now exists in this District affords; ... only beg leave to recommend that a new Jury list be made for this District, the present being insufficient.

And lastly, we beg leave to return our most sincere thanks to Mr. Justice Matthews; ... at the same time requesting that these presentments be printed in the publick papers. [Signed by 15 men, all members of the Grand Jury for that district].

Pauline Maier, *American Scripture, Making the Declaration of Independence* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1997) 229-230.

Document F.

Abigail Adams wrote letters to her husband John Adams throughout the time he was at the Continental Congress. The Adams family had returned to live in John's hometown of Braintree, Mass. after the Intolerable Acts closed the port of Boston.

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Braintree, 31 March 1776

I wish you would ever write me a letter half as long as I write you, and tell me, if you may, where your fleet are gone; what sort of defense Virginia can make against our common enemy; whether it is so situated as to make an able defense. Are not the gentry lords, and the common people vassals? Are they not like the uncivilized vassals Britain represents us to be? I hope their riflemen, who have shown themselves very savage and even blood-thirsty, are not a specimen of the generality of the people. I am willing to allow the colony great merit for having produced a Washington - but they have been shamefully duped by a Dunmore [the royal governor of Virginia who led the burning of Norfolk].

I have sometimes been ready to think that the passion for liberty cannot be equally strong in the breasts of those who have been accustomed to deprive their fellow-creatures of theirs. Of this I am certain, that it is not founded upon that generous and Christian principle of doing to others as we would that others should do unto us.

Do not you want to see Boston? I am fearful of the small-pox, or I should have been in before this time...

I feel very differently at the approach of spring from what I did a month ago. We knew not then whether we could plant or sow with safety, whether where we had tilled we could reap the fruits of our own industry, whether we could rest in our own cottages or whether we should be driven from the seacoast to seek shelter in the wilderness but now we feel a temporary peace, and the poor fugitives are returning to their deserted habitations.

I long to hear that you have declared an independency. And, by the way, in the new code of laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make, I desire you would remember the ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the husbands. Remember, all men would would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice or representation.

That your sex are naturally tyrannical is a truth so thoroughly established as to admit of no dispute; but such of you as wish to be happy willingly give up the harsh title of master for the more tender and endearing one of friend. Why, then, not put it out of the power of the vicious and the lawless to use us with cruelty and indignity with impunity ? Men of sense in all ages abhor those customs which treat us only as the vassals of your sex; regard us then as beings placed by Providence under your protection, and in imitation of the Supreme Being make use of that power only for our happiness.

April 5.

I want to hear much oftener from you than I do. March 8th was the last date of any that I have yet had. You inquire of me whether I am making saltpetre. I have not yet attempted it, but after soap-making believe I shall make the experiment. I find as much as I can do to manufacture clothing for my family, which would else be naked. I know of but one person in this part of the town who has made any. That is Mr. Tertius Bass, as he is called, who has got very near a hundred-weight which has been found to be very good. I have heard of some others in the other parishes. Mr. Reed, of Weymouth, has been applied to, to go to Andover to the mills which are now at work, and he has gone.

I have lately seen a small manuscript describing the proportions of the various sorts of powder fit for cannon, small arms, and pistols. If it would be of any service your way I will get it transcribed and send it to you. Every one your friends sends regards, and all the little ones.

Adieu.

The Adams Family Correspondence, Volume I, L.H. Butterfield, ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, Copyright © 1963 by the Massachusetts Historical Society).

Document G.

Letter of Benjamin Rush about signing the Declaration.

Dr. Benjamin Rush wrote John Adams on July 20, 1811, remembering the adoption of the Declaration of Independence some 35 years before.

Dear Old Friend... Do you recall your memorable speech upon the day on which the vote was taken? Do you recall the pensive and awful silence which pervaded the house when we were called up, one after another, to the table of the President of Congress to subscribe what was believed by many at that time to be our own death warrants? The silence and gloom of the morning were interrupted, I well recollect, only for a moment by Colonel [Benjamin] Harrison of Virginia [who was heavy], who said to Mr. [Elbridge] Gerry [who was skinny] at the table: "I shall have a great advantage over you, Mr. Gerry, when we are all hung for what we are now doing. From the size and weight of my body I shall die in a few minutes, but from the lightness of your body you will dance in the air for an hour or two before you are dead." This speech procured a transient smile, but it was soon succeeded by the solemnity with which the whole business was conducted....

Benjn. Rush.

Letters of Benjamin Rush, Volume II, L.H. Butterfield, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951).

Document H.

Advertisement for Runaway Slave.

Advertisement that appeared in the Pennsylvania Gazette, July 10, 1776, on the same front page where the Declaration of Independence appeared:

TEN DOLLARS Reward.

RUN from the ſubſcriber, living near Talbot Court-houſe, the 15th of laſt April, a dark Mulattoe Slave, named HARRY, about 26 years old; he is about 5 feet 8 or 9 inches high, ſtout and ſtrong made; he is of a mild temper, plauſible in ſpeech, and deceptive in converſation. It is ſuppoſed that he will endeavour to paſs for a freeman; he was lately ſeen in Kent county; had on, when ſeen, a country cloth jacket, tow linen ſhirt and trowſers, and a beaver hat with one corner burnt.--- The above reward will be paid if taken out of the province, or 50 miles from home, and ſecured in any goal ſo that I may get him; Forty Shillings, if 30 miles; Thirty Shillings, if 20 miles; with reaſonable travelling expences, if brought home.

¶ ALEXANDER M'CALLUM,

TEN DOLLARS Reward

UN from the subscriber, living near Talbot Court-house, the 15th of last April, a dark Mulatto Slave, named HARRY, about 26 years old; he is about 5 feet 8 or 9 inches high, stout and strong made; he is of a mild temper, plausible in speech, and deceptive in conversation. It is supposed that he will endeavour to pass for a freeman; he was lately seen in Kent county; had on, when seen, a country cloth jacket, tow linen shirt and trowsers, and a beaver hat with one corner burnt. --- The above reward will be paid if taken out of the province, or 50 miles from home, and secured in any goal so that I may get him; Forty Shillings, if 30 miles; Thirty Shillings, if 20 miles ; with reasonable travelling expences, if brought home.

ALEXANDER McCALLUM

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Document I.

Opening of the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen."

This declaration was adopted by the National Assembly of France, August 26, 1789.

The representatives of the French people, organized as a National Assembly, believing that the ignorance, neglect, or contempt of the rights of man are the sole cause of public calamities and of the corruption of governments, have determined to set forth in a solemn declaration the natural, unalienable, and sacred rights of man, in order that this declaration, being constantly before all the members of the Social body, shall remind them continually of their rights and duties; in order that the acts of the legislative power, as well as those of the executive power, may be compared at any moment with the objects and purposes of all political institutions and may thus be more respected, and, lastly, in order that the grievances of the citizens, based hereafter upon simple and incontestable principles, shall tend to the maintenance of the constitution and redound to the happiness of all. Therefore the National Assembly recognizes and proclaims, in the presence and under the auspices of the Supreme Being, the following rights of man and of the citizen.

Articles:

1- Men are born and continue free and equal in respect to their rights. Social distinctions can be founded on the public good only.

2- The end of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security and resistance to oppression.

3- The principle of all sovereignty resides essentially in the nation. No body nor individual may exercise any authority which does not proceed directly from the nation.

Document J.

A Description of the Fourth of July.

A description of July 4, 1837 in New York City as witnessed by Captain Frederick Marrayat, a well-known English author.

The commemoration commenced, if the day did not, on the evening of the 3rd, by the municipal police going round and pasting up placards, informing the citizens of New York that all persons letting off fireworks would be taken into custody, which notice was immediately followed up by the little boys proving their independence of the authorities, by letting off squibs, crackers, and bombs – and cannons, made out of shin bones, which flew in the face of every passenger, in the exact ratio that the little boys flew in the face of the authorities. This continued the whole night, and thus was ushered in the great and glorious day, illumined by a bright and glaring sun (as if bespoken on purpose by the mayor and corporation), with the thermometer at 90° in the shade. The first sight which met the eye after sunrise was the precipitate escape, from a city visited with the plague of gunpowder, of respectable or timorous people in coaches, carriages, wagons, and every variety of vehicle. "My kingdom for a horse!" was the general cry of all those who could not stand fire.

In the meanwhile, the whole atmosphere was filled with independence. Such was the quantity of American flags which were hoisted on board of the vessels, hung out of windows, or carried about by little boys, that you saw more stars at noonday than ever could be counted on the brightest night. On each side of the whole length of Broadway were ranged booths and stands, similar to those at an English fair, and on which were displayed small plates of oysters, with a fork stuck in the board opposite to each plate; clams sweltering in the hot sun; pineapples, boiled hams, pies, puddings, barley-sugar and many other indescribables. But what was most remarkable, Broadway being three miles long, and the booths lining each side of it, in every booth there was a roast pig, large or small, as the centre attraction. Six miles of roast pig! And that in New York City alone; and roast pig in every other city, town, hamlet, and village in the Union. What association can there be between roast pig and independence? ...

[Troops assembled in Battery Park and marched up Broadway.] The troops did not march in very good order, because, independently of their not knowing how, there was a great deal of independence to contend with. At one time an omnibus and four would drive in and cut off the general and his staff from his division; at another, a cart would roll in and insist upon following close upon the band of music; so that it was a mixed procession – generals, omnibus and four, music, cartloads of bricks, troops, omnibus and pair, artillery, hackney-coach, etc. etc. Notwithstanding all this, they at last arrived at City Hall, when those who were old enough heard the Declaration of Independence read for the sixty-first time ....

Witnessing America: The Library of Congress Book of Firsthand Accounts of Life in America 1600-1900, Noel Rae, ed. (New York: Penguin Reference, 1996).

Document K.

*Frederick Douglass gave, "**What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?**" 5 July 1852, at a meeting sponsored by the Rochester Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, Rochester Hall, Rochester, N.Y. These excerpts amount to one-sixth of the whole speech.*

Fellow-citizens, pardon me, allow me to ask, why am I called upon to speak here to-day? What have I, or those I represent, to do with your national Independence? Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us?...

This Fourth [of] July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn. To drag a man in fetters into the grand illuminated temple of liberty, and call upon him to join you in joyous anthems, were inhuman mockery and sacrilegious irony. Do you mean, citizens, to mock me, by asking me to speak to-day? ... Fellow-citizens; above your national, tumultous joy, I hear the mournful wail of millions! whose chains, heavy and grievous yesterday, are, to-day, rendered more intolerable by the jubilee shouts that reach them. If I do forget, if I do not faithfully remember those bleeding children of sorrow this day, "may my right hand forget her cunning, and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!" To forget them, to pass lightly over their wrongs, and to chime in with the popular theme, would be treason most scandalous and shocking, and would make me a reproach before God and the world. My subject, then fellow-citizens, is AMERICAN SLAVERY. I shall see, this day, and its popular characteristics, from the slave's point of view. Standing, there, identified with the American bondman, making his wrongs mine, I do not hesitate to declare, with all my soul, that the character and conduct of this nation never looked blacker to me than on this 4th of July! Whether we turn to the declarations of the past, or to the professions of the present, the conduct of the nation seems equally hideous and revolting. America is false to the past, false to the present, and solemnly binds herself to be false to the future. ...

What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer: a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelly to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciations of tyrants, brass fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade, and solemnity, are, to him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy - a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices, more shocking and bloody, than are the people of these United States, at this very hour.

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Appendix 2. Additional Support Materials

A. Map of the Thirteen British Colonies that became The United States.

Virginia
Maryland
Georgia
South Carolina
New York
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
Rhode Island
New Jersey
Delaware
Pennsylvania
Connecticut
North Carolina

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B. Table of Information about the Signers of the Declaration of Independence

Signer	Representing	Birthdate	Birthplace	Date died
John Adams	Massachusetts	30 October 1735	Massachusetts	4 July 1826
Samuel Adams	Massachusetts	27 September 1722	Massachusetts	2 October 1803
Josiah Bartlett	New Hampshire	21 November 1729	Massachusetts	19 May 1795
Carter Braxton	Virginia	10 September 1736	Virginia	10 October 1797
Charles Carroll	Maryland	19 September 1737	Maryland	14 November 1832
Samuel Chase	Maryland	17 April 1741	Maryland	19 June 1811
Abraham Clark	New Jersey	15 February 1726	New Jersey	15 September 1794
George Clymer	Pennsylvania	16 March 1739	Pennsylvania	23 January 1813
William Ellery	Rhode Island	22 December 1727	Rhode Island	15 February 1820
William Floyd	New York	17 December 1734	New York	4 August 1821
Benjamin Franklin	Pennsylvania	17 January 1706	Massachusetts	17 April 1790
Elbridge Gerry	Massachusetts	17 July 1744	Massachusetts	23 November 1814
Button Gwinnett	Georgia	circa 1735	England	19 May 1777
Lyman Hall	Georgia	12 April 1724	Connecticut	19 October 1790
John Hancock	Massachusetts	12 January 1737	Massachusetts	8 October 1793
Benjamin Harrison	Virginia	5 April 1726	Virginia	24 April 1791
John Hart	New Jersey	circa 1711	Connecticut	11 May 1779
Joseph Hewes	North Carolina	23 January 1730	New Jersey	10 November 1779
Thomas Heyward Jr.	South Carolina	28 July 1746,	South Carolina	6 March 1809
William Hooper	North Carolina	28 June 1742	Massachusetts	14 October 1790
Stephen Hopkins	Rhode Island	7 March 1707	Rhode Island	13 July 1785
Francis Hopkinson	New Jersey	21 September 1737	Pennsylvania	9 May 1791
Samuel Huntington	Connecticut	3 July 1731	Connecticut	5 January 1796
Thomas Jefferson	Virginia	13 April 1743	Virginia	4 July 1826
Francis Lightfoot Lee	Virginia	14 October 1734	Virginia	11 January 1797
Richard Henry Lee	Virginia	20 January 1732	Virginia	19 June 1794
Francis Lewis	New York	March 1713	Wales	31 December 1802
Philip Livingston	New York	15 January 1716	New York	12 June 1778
Thomas Lynch Jr.	South Carolina	5 August 1749	South Carolina	1779
Thomas McKean	Delaware	19 March 1734	Pennsylvania	24 June 1817
Arthur Middleton	South Carolina	26 June 1742	South Carolina	1 January 1787
Lewis Morris	New York	8 April 1726	New York	22 January 1798
Robert Morris	Pennsylvania	20 January 1734	England	9 May 1806
John Morton	Pennsylvania	1724	Pennsylvania	April 1777
Thomas Nelson Jr.	Virginia	26 December 1738	Virginia	4 January 1789
William Paca	Maryland	31 October 1740	Maryland	23 October 1799
Robert Treat Paine	Massachusetts	11 March 1731	Massachusetts	12 May 1814
John Penn	North Carolina	17 May 1741	Virginia	14 September 1788
George Read	Delaware	18 September 1733	Maryland	21 September 1798
Caesar Rodney	Delaware	7 October 1728	Delaware	29 June 1784
George Ross	Pennsylvania	10 May 1730	Delaware	14 July 1779
Benjamin Rush	Pennsylvania	24 December 1745	Pennsylvania	19 April 1813
Edward Rutledge	South Carolina	23 November 1749	South Carolina	23 January 1800
Roger Sherman	Connecticut	19 April 1721	Massachusetts	23 July 1793
James Smith	Pennsylvania	circa 1719	Ireland	11 July 1806
Richard Stockton	New Jersey	1 October 1730	New Jersey	28 February 1781
Thomas Stone	Maryland	1743	Maryland	5 October 1787
George Taylor	Pennsylvania	1716	Ireland	23 February 1781
Matthew Thornton	New Hampshire	1714	Ireland	24 June 1803
George Walton	Georgia	1741	Virginia	2 February 1804
William Whipple	New Hampshire	14 January 1730	Maine	28 November 1785
William Williams	Connecticut	23 April 1731	Connecticut	2 August 1811
James Wilson	Pennsylvania	14 September 1742	Scotland	28 August 1798
John Witherspoon	New Jersey	5 February 1723	Scotland	15 November 1794
Oliver Wolcott	Connecticut	1 December 1726	Connecticut	1 December 1797
George Wythe	Virginia	1726	Virginia	8 June 1806

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C. Biographical introductions:

John Adams (1735-1826) was a fierce supporter of independence in the Continental Congress. After suggesting to Thomas Jefferson a few small changes in his original draft, he became its strongest supporter during revisions by the Congress.

Samuel Adams (1722-1803) was one of the original patriots who organized opposition to British policies as early as 1763. He helped convince other colonies to rally around Massachusetts in his accounts of behavior by the British troops and authorities.

Charles Carroll (1737-1832) played a crucial role in getting Maryland's state legislature to endorse independence in the weeks when Congress was uncertain how to act. He arrived in Philadelphia after the Declaration of Independence had been approved, but was able to sign the parchment copy with other members of the Congress.

John Dickinson (1732-1808) provided some of the most convincing writing for the American cause as early as 1765, yet he voted against independence and refused to sign the Declaration of Independence. He was committed to America, however, and left Congress to serve as a brigadier general.

Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) was very well known as the publisher of *Poor Richard's Almanac* and as a scientist who confirmed that lightening is electricity before he became the elder statesman of the Revolution. He assisted every Congress and represented the United States in European capitals.

Elbridge Gerry (1744-1814) represented Massachusetts at the Continental Congress and later served as a congressmen and governor of that state. He also served as the national Vice President under James Madison.

Lyman Hall (1724-1790) helped popularize the American cause in Georgia after moving there from New England. While he was serving in Congress, the British seized his property, but he returned to Georgia and later became its governor.

John Hancock (1737-1793) signed the Declaration of Independence first as the President of the Constitutional Convention. He later served as the first elected governor of Massachusetts.

Stephen Hopkins (1707-1785) was opposed to British policies he encountered as a governor of Rhode Island and signed the Declaration of Independence on behalf of that state. He hated slavery and freed all of his own slaves in 1774.

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) wrote the Declaration of Independence after several years of arguing that the colonies should make their own laws. Beside politics, where he held most of the important posts during his career, Jefferson excelled at anthropology, architecture, diplomacy and science.

Richard Henry Lee (1732-1794) gestured with one hand holding a silk handkerchief when he spoke because he had lost a finger in a hunting accident. He organized the Virginia patriotic Committee of Correspondence and made the proposal for American Independence that was unanimously approved and announced in the Declaration of Independence.

Francis Lewis (1713-1802) as a representative of New York he appeared in the first three colonial assemblies, beginning with what was known as the Stamp Act Congress. During the American Revolution, British troops destroyed his property and imprisoned his wife for several months.

Caesar Rodney (1728-1784) represented Delaware in the Continental Congress despite suffering from cancer. He also acted as a brigadier general and helped his state contribute more than its share of troops and supplies to the revolutionary effort.

Edward Rutledge (1749-1800) paid for his strong support for independence by being captured by the British after he left Philadelphia to help defend South Carolina after attack. Once freed, he remained active in state politics and represented his state in the U.S. Senate.

Richard Stockton (1730-1781) was sent to Philadelphia specifically to vote for independence as a New Jersey representative in the spring of 1776. He nevertheless insisted on hearing arguments for and against separation before voting for independence. Soon after, he was captured by the British, suffered in captivity and lost his wealth.

William Williams (1731-1811) helped Connecticut for 45 years by serving as an Assemblyman in that state. While representing that state in the Congress, he provided his own money to help pay for the costs of the war.

George Wythe (1726-1806) voiced the idea very early that the American colonies governed themselves and owed deference only to the king and not to Parliament. In Virginia he acted as the first law professor in the Americas and taught many other patriots.

William Whipple (1730-1785) signed the Declaration of Independence and represented New Hampshire at the Continental Congress until he was made a brigadier general of a militia from his home state.

D. For teachers – other useful sites

Nara.gov/exhall/charters/declaration/decmain.html

Pluto.clinch.edu/history/weiv2/civ2ref/billor.html

Ngeorgia.com/history/americanrevolution.html

Jefferson.village.virginia.edu/seminar/unit1/text/adams.htm

www.franceway.com/culture/declarat.htm

Douglass.speech.nwu.edu/doug_a10.htm

www.lib.virginia.edu/etext/readex/15239.html

Lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/declara/ruffdrft.html

www.inreach.com/pack555/Gettysburg.htm

www.pub.whitehouse.gov/uri-res/I2R?urn:pdi://oma.eop.gov.us/1996/8/29/1.text.1

history.hanover.edu/early/locke/j-l2-001.htm

web66.coled.umn.edu/new/MLK/MLK.html

www.libertynet.org/edcivic/freddoug.html

www.fi.edu/franklin/scientst/scientst.html

Pluto.clinch.edu/history/amrev/readings/dick.htm

Odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/D/1776-1800/paine/CM/sensexx.htm

www.universitylake.org/primarysources.html

Memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lwjelink.html

www.georgetown.edu/bassr/heath/syllabuild/iguide/adamsaj.html

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IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

A DECLARATION

BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

WHEN in the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the Separation.

WE hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes; and accordingly all Experience hath shewn, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while Evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security. Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the Necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The History of the present King of Great-Britain is a History of repeated Injuries and Usurpations, all having in direct Object the Establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid World.

HE has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public Good.

HE has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

HE has refused to pass other Laws for the Accommodation of large Districts of People, unless those People would relinquish the Right of Representation in the Legislature, a Right inestimable to them, and formidable to Tyrants only.

HE has called together Legislative Bodies at Places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the Depository of their public Records, for the sole Purpose of fatiguing them into Compliance with his Measures.

HE has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly Firmness his Invasions on the Rights of the People.

HE has refused for a long Time, after such Dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and Convulsions within.

HE has endeavoured to prevent the Population of these States; for that Purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their Migrations hither, and raising the Conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

HE has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary Powers.

HE has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the Tenure of their Offices, and the Amount and Payment of their Salaries.

HE has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers to harrass our People, and eat out their Substance.

HE has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies, without the Consent of our Legislatures.

HE has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

HE has combined with others to subject us to a Jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our Laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

FOR quartering large Bodies of Armed Troops among us:

FOR protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

FOR cutting off our Trade with all Parts of the World:

FOR imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

FOR depriving us, in many Cases, of the Benefits of Trial by Jury:

FOR transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended Offences:

FOR abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary Government, and enlarging its Boundaries, so as to render it at once an Example and fit Instrument for introducing the same absolute Rule into these Colonies:

FOR taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

FOR suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with Power to legislate for us in all Cases whatsoever.

HE has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

HE has plundered our Seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our Towns, and destroyed the Lives of our People.

HE is, at this Time, transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the Works of Death, Desolation, and Tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty and Perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous Ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized Nation.

HE has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the Executioners of their Friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

HE has excited domestic Insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the Inhabitants of our Frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known Rule of Warfare, is an undistinguished Destruction, of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions.

IN every stage of these Oppressions we have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble Terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated Injury. A Prince, whose Character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the Ruler of a free People.

NOR have we been wanting in Attentions to our British Brethren. We have warned them from Time to Time of Attempts by their Legislature to extend an unwarrantable Jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the Circumstances of our Emigration and Settlement here. We have appealed to their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the Ties of our common Kindred to disavow these Usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our Connections and Correspondence. They too have been deaf to the Voice of Justice and of Consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the Necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of Mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace, Friends.

WE, therefore, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in GENERAL CONGRESS, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the World for the Rectitude of our Intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly Publish and Declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political Connection between them and the State of Great-Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which INDEPENDENT STATES may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm Reliance on the Protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

Signed by ORDER *and in* BEHALF *of the* CONGRESS,

JOHN HANCOCK, PRESIDENT.

ATTEST.
CHARLES THOMSON, SECRETARY.

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The Declaration of Independence

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